

Howland Wood - Curatorial

Robinson, John
(Peabody Museum

Salem, MA]

Robinson, John

1914-1926

Robinson, John

1920-1925

of Peabody Museum

original front of folder)

Robinson, John

Robinson, John

1920-1925

of Peabody Museum

Salem, July 8, 1914

- Dear Mr. Wood:

Early in May I mailed, - or I feel very sure I did, - a letter to you enclosing two accounts of Ramsden's and a check for the sum due him on them. I am writing at the museum and have left my memorandum at the house and will add the details later. Now I may have done the same thing Ramsden did one time and misdirected the letter. I was writing him at the same time and there is a remote possibility I directed the letter intended for you to him or to Japan. However, the check has not come back. It had not appeared in my June account and I thought perhaps you had got it but not cashed it. But it has had time to return to me from the dead letter office and now from Japan. Of course I can duplicate the check but the memoranda I can not duplicate although, of course, Mr. Ramsden has the bills and would know that the account settled them and that the coins I returned balanced the charges. I wrote him at the time and wrote you that I felt obliged to haul in a little until I know "where I am at" in these days of uncertainty in investments. I am very lucky not to have had a cent in our B. & M. R.R. in which so many New Englanders got caught, for I have always suspected it to be unsafe and sold out all I had there by inheritance. Also I have but a small amount in the New Haven, but there are several things going back on me and it is safest to stop until I adjust my matters. I have also been at considerable expense in house work here and now that my catalog is out and the collection and books may well wait further additions a while. Of course, I want to get any small things and such as come out now ^{and} then which may be harder to obtain later, but for the expensive things which seemed to be coming in pretty fast I feel obliged to wait. Another great piece of good fortune was that the great fire in Salem did not touch a single building of historic interest, a single institution of historic or scientific character nor a single old type of residence of value architecturally. And yet it destroyed utterly about one fourth of the built up area of the city. It is hoped that it will be

rebuilt in better shape. A commission has been appointed to have full control of these matters. I am

Very Truly Yours

John Robinson

OK. May 6, 1874

Last check received Feb 27 38.75

Salem, July 21, 1913.

My dear Mr. Wood.

Doubtless you think that I have utterly disappeared from the face of the earth. I came near it when I received your wedding cards and have only just recovered sufficiently to compose a proper letter of best wishes for yourself and Mrs. Wood. If the sun had proceeded to rise in the west I could not have been more taken a-back for I had no inkling of the matter. Now I recall your letter this spring you referred to Dr. Marvin's death and said that you supposed that you were nearer to the family than anyone else. Of course I understand that now, but then it was only a matter of intimacy which might occur to any of us. Well I give you my sincerest congratulations and best wishes for long and steady happiness. Do you realize that I have been married 43 years and have grandchildren, - 8 of them, - one being 17 years old? I began pretty early. Mrs. Robinson was 19 and I was 23. I sent you from Boston on Saturday a very trifling trifle to remind Mrs. Wood that Salem still existed in the past if much changed in the present, - a copy of "The house of seven gables". Give it her with my sincere wishes for health ^{happiness} and prosperity and all else. When you get on this way you must bring her to Salem and we will have a Salem day, - if she is interested in the old times and I imagine from association with her father's work she must be, - and we will forget the Salem of the present and look at "witch pins", old houses, Institutes and museums and see Mrs. Robinson at lunch. Now for the second part of my letter.

I am enclosing a bill, and check which nearly busted me, and you can see what I have got and return the rubbings later. They are a fine lot. Ramsden writes that coins are scarce in China after the upheaval and he sees no prospect for getting more at present. I am getting on finely with my catalog and will have it out in a month. I am now at work at the index. It makes a nice little article and I shall have a picture of the cabinet and reproductions of the portraits of my father and mother you have seen in my library. Had you been near at hand I should have bothered you again for assistance in getting some notes to explain some of the Mohammedan books, but as it is I guess they will go all right. I got nearly all ^{the works} I took notes from the day I was in Brookline.

When the paper is a little farther along I want you to give me a list of some numismatic institutions I ought to send copies to. At the last minute if anything turns up I shall write you again. For now believe me, Sincerely Yours

John Robinson

Salem, Sept 29, 1914

My dear Mr. Wood:

It is a long time since I have communicated with you in any way and I hope that you will not think I have forgotten you entirely or that ~~I have a~~ business matter unsettled with Mr. Ramsden for which you are in a way responsible. ^{to him.} That check has never turned up and a recent letter from Ramsden shows that I had not by mistake sent it to him directly. I shall now stop the check of May 6 for \$24. and start again to settle the account to date. Since the last time I wrote you I have had from Mr. Ramsden three small invoices. Some Turkestan-Chinese coins, some iron Chinese coins and some paper money of recent date.

Singularly enough, he sent the Turkestan lot practically duplicate of the lot previously taken. I have found two I wanted and of the iron coins I did not want but nine. I took all of the few paper pieces sent. I will enclose an account and at the same time write Ramsden about the case and also regarding rubbings of any quantity of alay series of coins he wants to use in the study he is making of the subject. I can't think they would be of any use to him and so I shall select such as are less common and perhaps send him some originals of the plantation tokens which he specially asks for.

Matters have quieted down since the great fire and the center of the town is normal in every way. Some building is going on but not very much as yet. The large factory (cotton) will be built up at once.

I saw a nice notice of the exhibition at N.Y. Winter is approaching to my regret and the frost killed off some of the things in my garden last night. Hoping that you are well I am

Very Truly Yours

John Robinson

Salem, July 21, 1913.

My dear Mr. Wood.

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of some numismatic institutions I ought to send copies to. At the last
minute if anything turns up I shall write you again. For now believe
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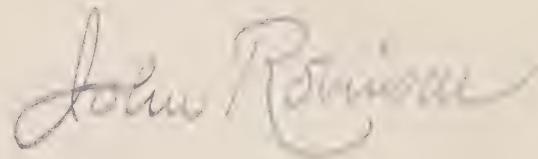
John Robinson

My dear Mr. Wood:

Your kind suggestion regarding the paper on Chinese paper money by Mr. Davis came the same day that the paper itself came to the Essex Institute. I have read it⁴ carelessly but do not exactly see why he went in to the subject as he did. However it is a finely illustrated article.

Do you know I had not seen the death of Ramsden and the Numismatist with the notices was on the table with my mail that brought your letter. It is too bad and the opportunity to have a thoroughly exhaustive account of early Chinese coins by an authority has gone with him. I have, of course, no knowledge of his death. I have not had a letter from him for about a year and nothing from the firm. I was intending to write him a friendly letter but it has been postponed from month to month. If you get any particulars kindly let me know about it. I am

Sincerely Yours

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "John Robinson". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a long, sweeping underline.

Salem, October 9, 1915

7.12.1917

JOHN ROBINSON
18 SUMMER STREET
(PERMANENT ADDRESS)
SALEM, MASS.

April 12, 1917

My dear Mr. Wood:

I have not heard directly from you for a long time and now I have the check to break silence with a favor to ask. Can you tell me the probable figure at which the set of Numismatist will sell for and also the set of Spink, in Iow's sale of April 18 in New York?

The Numismatist is to be sold as 29 volumes, 18 vols bound, 11 unbound. Spink sells as 23 volumes, 13 bound, 10 unbound. I want to complete the sets ^{at Salem} but only need the first few vols of the Numismatist. Of Spink I need more. My idea was to buy the lots if I could at a fair figure and sell the ones I don't want again. What should you advise? They are lots 508 and 513 of Iow's sale catalog.

Another matter. A man who seems to be getting together everything in the way of Oriental coin books wrote the Institute for permission to have the Harnden letters copied and he is to have it done and the rubbings reproduced by the photo-something process. It will cost him quite a penny and I had a carbon copy made at the same time. ^(Practically at no cost to me for the copying) The whole will be about 100 to 150 pages of type written manuscript. The letters are valuable as the only thing I know where Harnden has made a detailed account of the ancient Chinese coins. ^{and his views regarding them} I have added many Lacouperie illustrations copied from his work. If your society would like the duplicate volume I shall be happy to give it to you with the illustrations ^(if which I shall have a set made) added of course. Possibly you may have all the matter in other form from him but I imagine not.

I seem by the Numismatist from time to time that you are deep in the Orientals and that the institution has the world's best collection. I congratulate you and the society both. I am

Very Truly Yours

John Robinson

April 14th, 1917.

Mr. John Robinson,
18 Summer Street,
Salem, Mass.

My dear Mr. Robinson:-

It has been in my mind to write you for some time, but you got ahead of me. It certainly has been a long time since we have corresponded. The fact of the matter is that with the Ramsden Collection, and just a few days ago the Durkee Collection of Oriental coins coming in to us, I have been simply swamped. To make a long story short, Ramsden, in his will, left his collection for me to sell. If I was not able to find a purchaser, and by the time his son reached twenty-one years of age and showed no inclination to carry on his father's work, the collection was to go to the British Museum. Mr. Reilly has bought the Ramsden Collection, and that collection together with Mr. Reilly's own personal collection is installed here in the building, although it is still the property of Mr. Reilly. Sometime I want you to look this over at your leisure. It will be a month or so before we get it wholly unpacked and in a presentable condition.

The other matter that you mention interests us very much. Mr. Reilly has been intending to write to you to see if he could get the loan of Mr. Ramsden's letters in order to have copies made of them, as he is getting hold of everything he can of Ramsden's, therefore, your offer is most acceptable, and the Society will be much pleased to have you turn over the copy that you speak about. I am also very much interested to know who is the other person who is desirous of getting everything together in the way of Oriental coin books, and if it is not a breach of confidence I would appreciate it if you could let me know, because we are undoubtedly going to push the Oriental end to the limit, and there is no reason why we can not co-operate with the mysterious stranger.

It is hard to say just what that set of Numismatists will bring. The early volumes are rare, that is the first four volumes. Most of

the volumes since these can still be bought of the publisher. I should say a set would bring from a \$1.00 to \$1.50 a volume. The same with Spink, although they were issued at 60¢ a year, there are certain volumes that are very rare, and they are in fair demand in this country. If you bid a dollar, I doubt if you would get them. If you bid a dollar and a half, the probabilities are you might, but I can not say.

I trust you are well, and hoping to see you soon, I remain,

Yours very truly,

April 23, 1917.

Mr. John Robinson
18 Summer Street,
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:-

Your favor at hand and we are more than ever interested in who the man in Cleveland is who is so interested in Chinese books. We undoubtedly can help him out and at least cooperate with him a little on as we will have by fall, all of Ramsden's library.

In Ramsden's collection there were between 1200 and 1400 Chinese porcelain tokens, and in a collection we received the other day which formerly belonged to a Mr. Durkee, there are from 1200 to 1400 porcelain pieces. In looking over them casually we note that although the two collections duplicate one another, quite largely we can add between thirty and forty percent new varieties.

Thanking you again for the promise of a copy of Ramsden's letters, I remain;

Yours very truly,

June 15, 1917.

Mr. John Robinson
14 Summer Street,
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:-

Your letter and book came to hand to-day and I am taking haste to write you, both to acknowledge the receipt of your gift and to state my appreciation.

I never dreamt that it would be gotten out in any such fine form as it is done. We have been talking here of doing the same to Mr. Fawcett's letters to Reilly and myself. Unfortunately I have not always kept the rubbings accompanying the letters, and some of the letters I have cut up, etc., but eventually I think we can get together sufficient to make a considerable addition to the history of Chinese numismatics. As you say, there is loads of pertinent material in those letters that cannot be found anywhere else, and there is an atmosphere that one cannot find in manuscript made for publication. As yet, I have but glanced through two or three of the letters. The day of

The day of buying coins cheap in the Far East is over. In China there are a great many scholarly and rich Chinese who are paying big prices for rare coins, and in Japan the war has made a great many people wealthy and they are paying terrific prices right now for what a few years ago could be bought cheap. Nevertheless, as China is being opened up more and more, especially in new localities, many great rarities and new pieces are coming to life, and with the scientific work ~~which the~~ Chinese have been doing in archaeology, of late years, the true history of Chinese numismatics from our standpoint is but in its infancy. From everything that I can glean, we have more genuine antique pieces in this country than in Europe. The museums there are filled with fakes. We are hoping to get Fawcett's books by Fall.

Again thanking you for your kindness, I am,
Yours very sincerely,

PEABODY MUSEUM

SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS, U. S. A.

FOUNDED, 1867 (MUSEUM ESTABLISHED BY EAST INDIA
MARINE SOCIETY IN 1799).

EDWARD S. MORSE, Director
LAWRENCE W. JENKINS, Assistant Director

JOHN ROBINSON, In charge of Marine Room
LAWRENCE W. JENKINS, Curator of Ethnology
ALBERT P. MORSE, Curator of Natural History

August 14, 1919

My dear Mr. Wood:

I am sending you by separate post the "Emilio collection of Buttons" published by the Essex Institute as a special publication. It is sold at \$3. and if this strikes you more than it is worth to the Am. Numis. Soc. put it up as a gift from me. The plates cover some 200 of the buttons in the collection which is mounted in swinging frames in the exhibition hall. I see that it is said to be the largest single collection of military buttons anywhere. I had a great time hunting up the Li Hung Chang medal. I was sure I remembered it but it had been placed somewhere out of sight at the time some changes were made in the Chinese exhibit ^{and} of Ward's souvenirs. I also felt sure ^{the medal} Li did not have much to do with Ward. It seems that the medal was made in Hamburg in 1896 on ^{occasion of} the visit of Li to that city. Li was in New York later and gave it to Miss Elizabeth C. Ward, Frederick Townsend Ward's sister. I suppose Li was presented to her as such. The rubbings I send are not very good but you will get the whole out of the various papers.

I was thinking as I worked over the coins to day of the great changes of the past few years. My collection of coins and the books and the catalog itself would probably never have come to be what they all are if I had waited until 1917 or 1918 to accomplish the results. Mr. Pamsden is dead. You are in New York. Mr. Dow is in Boston having resigned at the Institute a year ago and I alone remain in the old spot, but not feeling so active as formerly. I incline to take things slowly and get tired in a half-day's work when I always could pitch-in for days and days together. I simply abhor growing old. My tastes and feelings are just as when 40 and I see no fun in the contemporaries around me. Younger people are the only ones worth while.

With kind regards I am

Sincerely Yours

John Robinson

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ALBERT P. MORSE, Curator of Natural History

April 17, 1920

Dear Mr. Wood:

I had a note from Mr. Hoe the other day regarding an inquiry about an old button from a lady in Vermont and took it to the Institute to the secretary and curator to see if it could be identified. ^{from the drawing} I do not know whether or not it was as the answer would be sent to the Vermont party in an enclosed directed envelope. It seemed to me to be an interesting button and the thread the owner spoke about is evidently a piece of cat gut on the wooden back and indicates an old piece of work. I hope the Institute could attribute it. I guess it is before 1815.

But the question I want to ask personally is,- what is the coin or jeton a man brought in here the last week. It was thin, about the size of an old five dollar gold piece, made of base metal and had the liberty head of the dime of similar date, 1803, and reverse like it also. It had "KETTLE" at the right of the bust. Was I right in telling him it was a jeton?

How have you stood the winter, a horribly hard one? I pulled thru but feel tired and am growing old I fear and not inclined to do as much as formerly altho my head seems quite as active. I am at the hand-book of our Marine Room collections and it will be printed in the fall I suppose. An illustrated account of our marine collections and all about shipping in Salem

With kind regards I am

Sincerely Yours

John Robinson

April 20th, 1920.

Mr. John Robinson,
18 Summer Street,
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:-

I am very glad to hear from you again despite the very hard winter we have just gone through. We in New York did not have as bad as they did in New England but it was bad enough here.

I am going to take a six months' leave and go to England and France, and if nothing happens will sail a week from today. I will be most of the time in London studying and having a good time.

The piece you speak about I am familiar with, but it has never been absolutely settled just what it was intended for. It is, without doubt, a card counter made in England by a man named Kettle. It comes in two or three sizes. They are quite common and the number made must have been large, therefore you are right in telling him it was a jeton, though in this case I prefer to call it a counter.

I made a short run to Boston the other day, but did not have long enough time to come up to Salem. I am hoping to have some vacation left when I get back, and it is my plan in September or October to spend some little time in Boston and vicinity.

I remain,

Yours very truly,

November 22nd, 1920.

Mr. John Robinson,
18 Summer Street,
Salem, Mass.

My dear Mr. Robinson:-

There has recently come into this country two large 50 tael pieces in gold struck in 1869. Until these appeared I had never heard of anything like them. I am enclosing a photograph of one which will give you some idea of what it looks like although it happened to be accidentally printed over some other coins. Did you ever hear of this, or do you know anything about it, why it was issued, &c, or do you know what happened in China in 1869 to cause its issue. It probably is a commemorative or presentation issue.

I trust you are well. I am hoping to be in Boston for a week or so a little later on, and would very much like to come out to see you.

Very truly yours,

Curator.

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—
JOHN ROBINSON, In charge of Marine Room
LAWRENCE W. JENKINS, Curator of Ethnology
ALBERT P. MORSE, Curator of Natural History

May 26, 1921

Dear Mr. Wood

I am enclosing a queer thing which was dug up in Beverly this spring and which a girl brought into the museum this week. I do not know whether or not it is a coin even. What do you think it is and is the marking on it an inscription? It is broken into several pieces but may be put together easily. Any suggestions you have to offer will be gladly received.

I see occasional reports of your doings in N.Y. in the reports in the Numismatist. Hope you are well. I am

Sincerely Yours

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "John Robinson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

May 28th, 1921.

Mr. John Robinson,
c/o Peabody Museum,
Salem, Mass.

My dear Mr. Robinson:-

I was most glad to hear from you and feel somewhat conscious-stricken that I have not written more than I have since my little trip to Salem. Since I got back to New York I have been kept constantly on the jump.

I have examined the " queer thing", and I can not make up my mind that it is old. It looks to me as if it was made by the electrolysis process, that is, a copper deposit on a wax mould. What it is and what it was intended for is beyond my comprehension.

Trusting you are well, I remain,

Very truly yours,

Curator.

EDWARD S. MORSE, Director
LAWRENCE W. JENKINS, Assistant Director

JOHN ROBINSON, In charge of Marine Room
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PEABODY MUSEUM
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November 19, 1921

My dear Mr. Wood:

My son-in-law, Richard Wheatland, who you met at N.Y. the day we called on you some years ago, has been abroad and in answer to a rather joking suggestion of mine taken seriously, brought back for the museum the fine astrolabe a photo of which I am sending you hoping you may be able to tell me whether or not any of the visible inscriptions give a name or date or other hint as to age or maker. Of course I can not make anything out of it. The dealer from whom it came knew nothing about it. They were devised by the Arabian astronomers as early as 700 A.D. and adapted for sea service to get the time and latitude about 1480. Columbus is supposed to have had one and they were used as late as 1670-1700. They are the ancestor of the quadrant and sextant. Any hints you may be able to offer or suggestions as to anyone who may know something about it will be gladly received and with many thanks, but do not put yourself to much trouble about it. I recognised our portraits in the magazine, standing on the U.F.A. steps with the co-numismatists. I am

Sincerely Yours

John Robinson

November 22nd, 1921.

Mr. John Robinson,
Peabody Institute,
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:-

Your letter of the 19th and photograph just received. I can not see anything on the photograph that would give any clue as to when or where the autolabe was made, nothing to suggest date or place. I am sorry that I can not help you out, and am returning the photograph herewith.

Very sincerely yours,

Curator.

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January 4, 1922

Dear Mr. Wood

Can you without trouble tell me what the inscription the enclosed rubbing is? I take the thing to be a very modern imitation of an ancient token of some sort and quite likely a fake, not even an imitation, - hardly a temple medal I suppose. It was sent a friend here from a correspondent in China. I do not find anything just like in in my book at hand. Don't bother over it.

If you had the awful cold snap we did Monday you may be too frozen up to care to look up coins. I am just thawing out. Many returns of Happy New Years

Sincerely Yours

John Robinson

January 7th, 1922

John Robinson, Esq.
Peabody Museum
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:

We have three of those coins of which you
sent me rubbings, all of which are fakes. I
have tried to make out the inscription -

I make the first character CHI, meaning
growing rice or level.

The second character I cannot make out.

The third character is KUAI - fair or public.

The fourth character is probably FAI - East,
but I can get no sense out of any of this.

I never saw any old coin like this, and I very
much doubt if any existed; it has no resemblance to
any known coins.

Very truly yours,

Curator

HW/E

Salem, January 12, 1922

Dear Mr. Wood

I thank you very much for the trouble you took to answer my query as to the nature of the fake Chinese coin. It settles a matter which seemed important to the owner and he is greatly pleased.

I enclose a clipping from ~~the~~ Transcript regarding the new dollar. From this I fear it is another of the awful things the U.S. get out. There are altogether too many inscriptions to go on our coins any way and the government artists (?) are not such as I should leave art matters to decide for me.

Is there any work now to take the place of the old Scott catalogs? I have many persons coming in at the museum to ask about coin prices and to get me to look over lots of odd coins and sometimes there are things which I want to look up. I keep the old Scott catalogs on hand and a few modern dealers lists but they ^(dealers' lists) are not very satisfactory. Should you know of anything please let me know, but if there is nothing new don't bother to answer.

I am

Very Truly Yours

John Robinson

January 18th, 1922

John Robinson, Esq.
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinsonn

The new dollar is not as bad as the papers make out. It might be better, but when people get used to it I think they will rather like it. Over a million were struck in 1921; and many millions will be struck this year, and probably other years.

There is no new work that takes the place of the old Scott catalogues. It is a pity but no one seems anxious to tackle such a thing; and I am inclined to think that it would be a losing venture if anyone did.

Very truly yours,

Curator

March 18th, 1912

John Robinson, Esq.
18 Summer Street
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:

In case you have not received one of
the enclosed from Mr. Ros, I am herewith
sending you a copy of the monograph by him
with his compliments.

Very truly yours,

Curator

HW/E

JOHN ROBINSON
18 SUMMER STREET
(PERMANENT ADDRESS)
SALEM, MASS.

Dear Mr. Wood:

I am very much obliged for the little brochure of Mr. Ros and am impressed with the knowledge shown in various languages and the finality such papers set upon the subject treated. I had not seen it. I wonder if he has had my catalog? If not I should like to send him a copy if you think he would care for it. I still have quite a number left over 30 I should think and should be glad to put them in good hands or libraries, so if you have any suggestion to make regarding their disposal I shall be glad. I am

Sincerely Yours

John Robinson

March 20, 1922

Robt. Robinson

Mr.

Tracy

March 21st, 1922

John Robinson, Esq.
18 Summer Street
Boston, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:

I could not say whether Mr. Ros has one of
your catalogues or not. Why not send him one?
The only others I can think of to whom you might
send a copy are -

Mr. Robert Robertson, 140 53rd Street, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Mr. J. H. Brown, 1000 1st St., N.W., Wash. D.C., U.S.A.
Mr. J. H. Brown, 1000 1st St., N.W., Wash. D.C., U.S.A.

I was really astonished at the knowledge and
scholarship evidenced by Mr. Ros in his mono-
graph.

Very truly yours,

Curator

HW/E

March 30th, 1922

John Robinson, Esq.-
14 Summer Street
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:

I forgot to mention in my letter to you
the other day that Mr. John LeBlanc (94 Fair-
mont Street, Dorchester, Mass.) is a very en-
thusiastic collector of out-of-the-way coins,
and I think that he would appreciate very much
a copy of your Oriental Numismatics.

Very truly yours,

Curator

HW/E

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FOUNDED, 1867 (MUSEUM ESTABLISHED BY EAST INDIA
MARINE SOCIETY IN 1799).

EDWARD S. MORSE, Director
LAWRENCE W. JENKINS, Assistant Director

JOHN ROBINSON, In charge of Marine Room
LAWRENCE W. JENKINS, Curator of Ethnology
ALBERT P. MORSE, Curator of Natural History

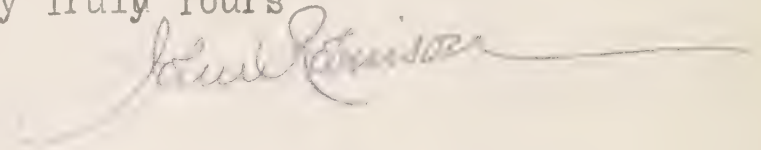
May 16, 1922

Dear Mr. Wood:

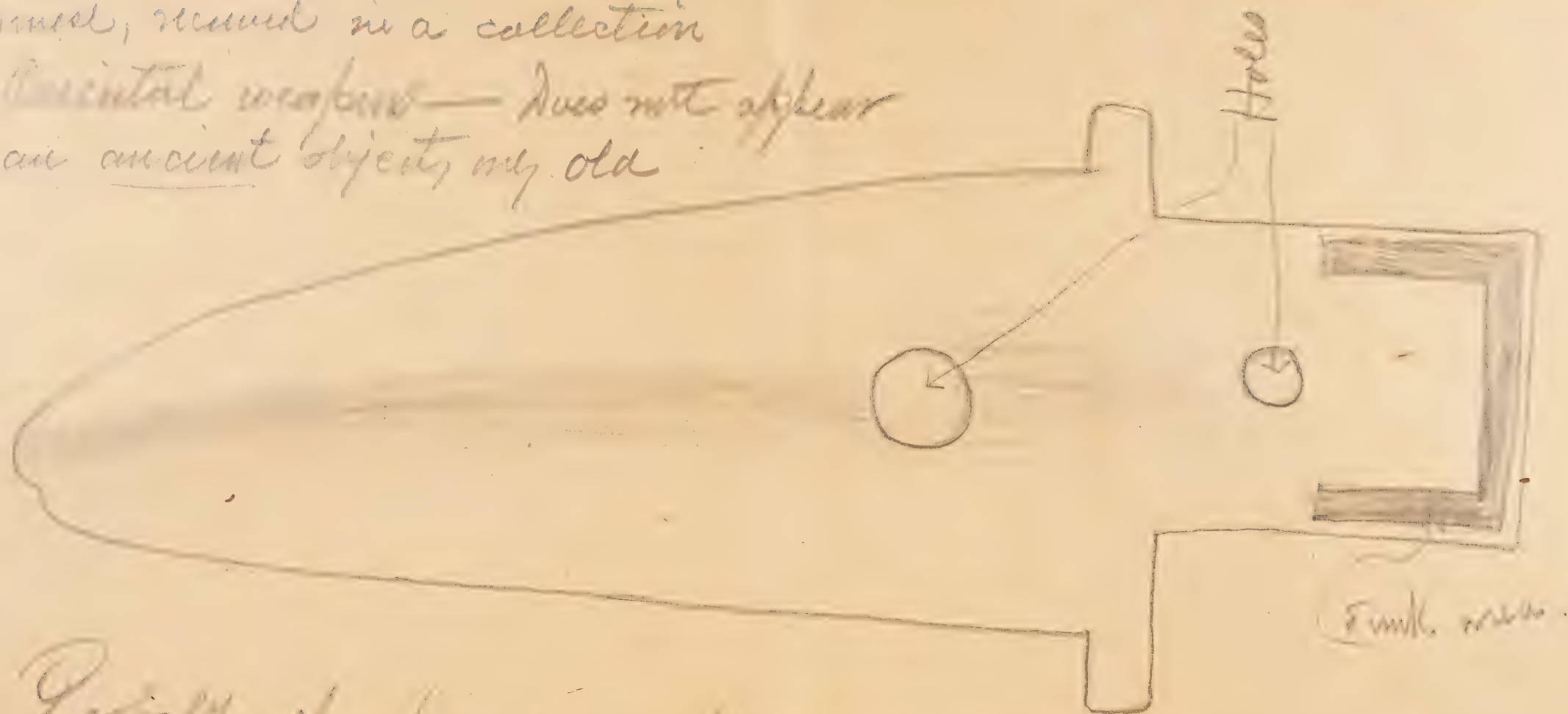
Among the weapons from the East recently given the Peabody Museum, this Chinese object came. The description on the tracing tells all we know about it. It is not very old if you may judge by appearances altho not new, and not rough like the fake coin and medal cast copies one meets continually. I wondered if by any chance it could be one of those odd things like the knife coin prototypes which Ramsden thought so much of and sent me a specimen. Have you any idea about it and can it be the copy of an old medal. Any information will be most welcome.

The opening season is delightful after winter and I do not remember a spring when the buds and flowers have been more beautiful. Perhaps you have taken a run into the country from New York to enjoy them. I am

Very Truly Yours



Chinese, received in a collection
of Oriental weapons — Does not appear
as an ancient object, my old



Probably of brass, or copper, dark bronze color
Peabody Museum, Salem, Mass.

Tracing natural size

Flat, midrib somewhat raised

(Do not return this)

Like this in section

May 17th, 1922

John Robinson, Esq.
Peabody Museum
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:

I have seen several spearpoints of which you sent a rubbing. I think under the circumstances they could not be called Coins, but I believe they go under the name of Ceremonial pieces. I have seen both old ones and very beautifully made, and patinated worn ones. I think they also come in jade. This is really all I know about them.

The Spring is really turning out to be most delightful, and naturally one tries to get out into the open as much as possible. I plan to be away most of the summer. Whether I will get up to Boston remains to be seen. If I am able to do so, I shall make a point of looking you up.

Please remember me to Mrs. Robinson,

Very truly yours,

Curator

14/3

Dear Mr Wood

Perhaps you keep, in Mf,
such things as the
enclosed — It was given
me by someone a year
ago — I have puzzled
out it considerably to see
how the jew's head was
worked out (especially the
hat rim) without cut-
ting deeper into the
corn — Even the date
and mint mark
shows at the left lower
corner —

I hope that you are

well —

I am

Sincerely Yours
John Robinson

Salem 10/6/22

I am getting to be an old
man & feel more shaky
this fall — don't like it
& grow old very ungrace-
fully —

October 10th, 1922

John Robinson, Esq.
Summer Street
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:

Many thanks for the Hebraic nickel (as it is called). We have one or two of these but we have none like that you have sent, and we are very glad to add this to our collection.

These coins are very cleverly made. It is done by cutting some of the back ground and using as much of the features of the Indian as possible. There is, apparently, sufficient metal in the hair at the top of the head to be able to engrave the rim of the coin. Engravers are skillful in being able to push up some of the metal so that it does not show.

I am sorry that you are feeling shaky, and trust that you will outgrow it.

Very truly yours,

Curator

10/1

PEABODY MUSEUM

SALEM, MASS., U. S. A.

Dear Mr. Wood:

I am sending you some Gloucester 300th
annuversary souvenir "coins" as they call them
down there.

Sincerely Yours

8/30/23

L. R.

Mr. Howland Wood




Broadway & 156th St.

Am. Numis. Soc.

New York City

Dear Mr Wood

Can you tell me without
too much trouble what this
little coin is?

About  this size & the
stroke so flat to make
a rubbing difficult—

Hope you are well

Sincerely Yrs
John Robinson

18 January 18
Salem, Sept. 12/23



MON. REP. VALLESIA



* S. THEODOLVS * 1628

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

119 WEST 40TH ST.,
NEW YORK CITY

Dear Reader:

Wouldn't you be woefully disappointed if Uncle Sam's mails failed to deliver to you the valuable gift a friend had promised you? That very disappointment is quite likely to come to you now unless you mail the enclosed card immediately before you forget it. Because if you don't you will probably never receive the priceless gift Good Housekeeping has for you.

You cannot buy Good Housekeeping's New Recipe Book anywhere at any price. Every request to purchase this splendid book has been refused - and we have many such requests every day. So you will appreciate fully the extraordinary offer we are making you now. It is to GIVE you a copy of the New Recipe Book so that you may see for yourself the amount of time and money Good Housekeep-

August 31st, 1923.

Mr. Robinson
Dear John:

Many thanks for the Gloucester souvenir
coins. They came to hand this morning.

I trust you have had a pleasant summer,
and hope the coming winter will not be too cold.

I see no immediate prospects of my
getting up to New England.

Believe me

Very sincerely yours,

Mr. John Robinson,
18 Summer Street,
Salem, Mass.

September 14th, 1923.

Mr. John Robinson,
18 Sumner Street,
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:

The coin you write about is
presumably a half-batzen of the Canton
of Vallais, or better known as Sittern
in Switzerland. In poor condition
they seem to be rather common.

Very truly yours,

Salem, January 24, 1924

Dear Mr. Wood:

I have sent you my last effort on China,- the table ware,-and also sent a copy to Mr. Reilly addressing it to your museum not knowing the correct personal one. I trust you will get them all right. It is probably my last effort at a prolonged study of any subject and I shall in the future only get up quick writings. Do you realize I am seventy-seven!! And most shocking of all I have been since about Thanksgiving week a great-grand-father!!! Stephen Wheatland (my daughter Mary's son) has a son himself and the result is as stated. It is about time for me to surrender.

I am enclosing a rubbing of a "toughra" (?) in the bottom of a dish brought from Damascus by another of my grand-children, David Wheatland, who was there this last year. Can you without trouble tell me what it is about? A text, a name or an add. of the maker? I read of meetings and see your name in the Numismatist often. Altho I do not have the benefit of hearing any lectures, concerts or table talk on account of increasing deafness, I keep up in coins and flowers by reading books and periodicals. I can get on with one person all right but a gathering is hopeless.

With kind regards I am

Very Truly Yours

John Robinson

January 26th, 1924

John Robinson, Esq.
Summer Street
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:

I have read with much interest your account of blue china and, like you, have been wondering why not more has been written on the subject. I wish you had shown by pictures a little more the various differences between Nanking and Canton styles. As I want to keep the copy you sent, I wonder if you would be so good as to send one to my mother, Mrs. George H. Wood, 1037 Beacon Street, Brookline, 47.

Congratulations on becoming a great-grandfather!

I really cannot make out anything intelligible on the Arabic cartouche which you sent me. I can read it but it makes no sense, but I will show it to somebody more familiar with Arabic than I am. It is like family monograms - are hard to read, but simple after they have been explained.

Very sincerely yours,

Curator

HW/E

February 21st, 1924

John Robinson, Esq.
18 Summer Street
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:

The letter from Mr. Humphreys interests me very much - especially concerning the die of the Washington cent, and I will write to Mr. Humphreys to see what can be done about it.

Many thanks for bringing this to my attention.

Very sincerely yours,

Curator

April 16th, 1924

Mr. John Robinson
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:

I would like to refresh my memory with regard to something you told me years ago concerning Matthew Stickney's 1804 dollar. I know you said something about what he had told you shortly after he brought it back with regard to how he traded it at the Mint and how he never really considered it as having been made in 1804. If you would send me a line as to what you can recollect about the matter, I should be very grateful to you.

Could you not write up some little account of those Spanish dollars which we used in China? You had one or two sets which the sea captains had as samples with numbers engraved on them. I think it would make a nice little account.

Very truly yours,

Curator

JOHN ROBINSON
18 SUMMER STREET
(PERMANENT ADDRESS)
SALEM, MASS.

April 20, 1924

Dear Mr. Wood:

It is so long ago that I do not recall the talk about the Stickney 1804 dollar. My remembreace is that Mr. Stickney exchanged it for some gold coin and that it was one of three or four the mint had struck from the 1804 face die with the revers of some other. But I may have mixed it in my mind with other accounts of ~~the~~ what Mr. Stickney said. S.S.Crosby ^(now dead) would have been more likely to have the story right for he was interested in the matter when he was calling on Mr. Stickney about the Colonial coins. I wonder if he ever put in writing anything he gathered on the calls he made? I will try and see Miss Stickney (I meet the sisters occasionally) and ask her if she has any traditions about it. If I get anything out of her I will write you at once.

I am in haste

Sincerely Yours,

John Robinson

I got a nice note from your mother thanking me for the china-ware paper. I was very glad you gave me her address for I did not know what it was and wanted to send her a copy.

I will think over the idea of a short note on the Spanish dollar used in China - I have two fine "muster" sets (samples of grades) - I will have them photographed also.

Salem, May 13, 1924

My dear Mr. Wood

I have not seen either of the Misses Stickney about the 1804 dollar and I do not recall anything of my own in the way of reminiscences about it. I do not think that the old man had very much to say about it. He usually had a little sort of muttered prayer or devotional utterances over his rarest coins when he showed them to us boys but I do not recall any historical account of the dollar. In the Stickney sale catalog, which of course you have looked over, is all that it seems to me it is possible to say about it; his letter and the long story which Chapman evolved. So I am afraid I can not help you.

About the dollars Mexican, which the old China merchants had to deal with Orientals I have had my samples, "musters", photographed and am sending you a print. One set is put up in the box (Chinese) shown and the other set was in wrappers of common paper marked with the order of value, - A, B, C, etc. I never could find the basis for the valuations. My father had these about 1834 to 1837 to use in China and here to select Spanish (Mexican) dollars for purchases for the firm for which he was agent and supercargo. I always understood that the "Carolus" dollars were the best, but one set shows a Carolus IIII dollar marked "E", the same as a Ferd. VII, so that can not be a good point. In the box set the second dollar is marked "A2". The oldest dollars seem to be marked best. When the old Salem ships sailed off they took kegs of the dollars in the cabin and were a great temptation to pirates and met with disaster occasionally. Mr. Henry M. Brooks, one time coin collector, and secretary of the Essex Institute years ago, told me that when

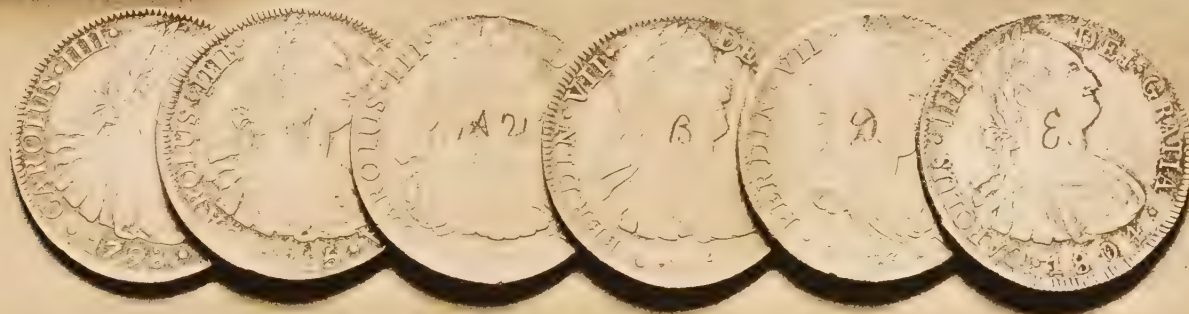
he was a boy or young man in the old Salem Bank, he frequently got up early to open the bank so that the teams for Joseph Peabody could take the kegs of dollars off for a ship which was to sail early. They rolled them out of the vault and put them on the dray and teamed them to the wharf without any special protection than the men from the office with the teamster. A good many thousands of dollars were shipped in this way at one time. The Chinese merchants were very keen at detecting spurious dollars and could pick them out as fast as they could run the dollars thru their hands. I have half a dozen counterfeit dollars which came from lots which my father had in his business transactions for the mercantile firm, Bryant, Sturgiss & Co.

I don't think of any place where a good account of these dealings in dollars in bulk is treated but there may be one in some of the old merchant stories published that I do not know about.

We have had a week of the vilest weather imaginable and I quite long to see the sun and get into it. The season here is behind the usual time. I am

Very Truly Yours

John Robinson



Wm. (Samuel) Wolcott
1824-1857
Cousin, Thomas

B
M

May 21st, 1924

John Robinson, Esq.
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:

Many thanks for the photograph of the Spanish dollars. After looking at these, I think I am worse off than ever in trying to see why they gave different letters to the different pieces. The only explanation that I can see is possibly the mint marks on the back. This might be a clue; and, sometime at your leisure, could you not send me a list with these mint marks?

The weather, unfortunately, is still vile! I have been trying to have my house painted for three weeks.

Sincerely yours,

Curator

18 Summer St., Salem,

March 26, 1925

My dear Mr. Wood:

I have received from the Numis. Soc. of India,- and I suppose you have the same,- a notice about presenting Mr. Wright a medal and a request for a subscription. While I am not much interested in the matter I am willing to send a very modest sum. Also comes a very complicated proposition regarding the fees. As I understand it single yearly subscriptions are to be 10 shillings for outsiders and if compounded for five years 30 rupees inside, and 2 guineas for outsiders. That seems to be about two dollars per year at the 2 guinea rate.

What had I better do? Kindly suggest. I am getting old and five years may see me safely stowed away in mother earth. And what should I send for the medal?

I enclose a clipping,- two in fact,- from the transcript on the death of H.E. Morey. That is our old friend is it not? And to him I am indebted for the introduction to you which has proved so valuable to me and my numismatic interests since you came down to see me while we were at the old Essex House in Salem.

I hope that you are well this winter and as for me I have pulled thru nicely for the weather has been mild and I am grateful. Many changes have taken place in my family. Five of the Grand-children are married,- three are not and there are two great-grand-children and more expected!! One pair are in Oxford and a pair and their child in London, an unmarried one in Paris, a pair and child and an odd one in Bangor, Maine, and a pair in New York, the last, Anna Wheatland married Samuel, a son of Judge Samuel Ordway and is living somewhere off Madison Ave. I think E. 71st St. Mr. and Mrs. Wheatland are in Boston and a last married pair in Boston also. Can you beat that!!

I am Sincerely Yours

John Robinson

March 28th, 1925

John Robinson, Esq.
18 Summer Street
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:

Thank you for your letter. I had not heard of Morey's death. I am not at all surprised as he has been home for several years.

For the past few years, I have been sending my dues to the Indian Society for two years at a time, as I could then send an Indian bank note. Money Orders have always been a nuisance to India. I very much doubt if I will send them two guineas. I shall probably send them a One Pound Note every two years. As for the subscription for Mr. Wright, I had not contemplated sending anything as I have too many other expenses at present; and I do not know what would be the best way for you to send your contribution, if you should send one.

I am glad to hear you are well, and I can say the same. I have been kept sufficiently busy all the winter to keep me out of mischief.

I have not been to Boston for a long while, but hope to do so some time this summer. Just now my mother and father are in Europe.

With kind remembrances and best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Curator

April 8th, 1925

John Robinson, Esq.
18 Summer Street
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. Robinson:

Would you be interested in buying a selection of Mohammedan coins? I have a large collection here which was picked up in Persia, and it is a really very interesting lot. You could pick out whatever you might happen to want, as each piece is priced.

Best regards,

Very truly yours,

Curator

EDWARD S. MORSE, Director
LAWRENCE W. JENKINS, Assistant Director
JOHN ROBINSON, in Charge of Marine Room
LAWRENCE W. JENKINS, Curator of Ethnology
ALBERT P. MORSE, Curator of Natural History



Feb. 13, 1926.

Mr. Howland Wood,

Sec. American Numismatic Society,

Broadway at 156th St., New York, N. Y.

Dear Sir:-

We are preparing a bibliography, so far as practicable, of the writings of Mr. John Robinson in so far as published.

Our Acting-Director, Mr. L. W. Jenkins, has asked me to write you and ask if you know of any other than the two articles listed below on the subject of coins, and if so, if you will kindly furnish us the references to them.

1890. Old Coins and New.

Amer. Journ. Numism., Oct. 2 pp.

1913. Oriental Numismatics. A catalog of books relating to the coinage of the East, presented to the Essex Institute (Salem, by John Robinson). Privately printed. 102 pp. 2 pl.

Very truly yours,

Albert P. Morse

Peabody Museum of Salem, Mass.

and his editing of the Rumford Letters

February 16th, 1926

Mr. Albert P. Morse
Peabody Museum
Salem, Mass.

Dear Sir:

Replying to your letter of February 13th, with regard to Mr. John Robinson's numismatic writings, would state that our Card Catalogue shows but the two items which you mention - Old Coins and New, and Oriental Numismatics. I think, however, you should mention his editing, or, better, his assembling, of the Rameden' Letters, over which we were in correspondence a while ago.

Very truly yours,

Curator